

be placed in telegraphic union by an overland route, without the necessity of crossing to Europe by the route of the lost Atlantic cable, or the proposed Greenland route.

If this connecting link should be constructed by Behring's Strait, the three continents would be united by a line having but forty miles of sea, to cross, which, consequently, would be the most reliable and cheapest mode of union. The whole line being a land line, excepting the crossing of Behring's Strait, would insure it against all doubts and accidents of the deep sea cables, and render it reliable and easy of repair and inspection.

COMMERCE OF THE AMOOR.
Fifteen vessels have entered the Amoor during the year, with assorted cargoes of merchandise, stores, provisions, and material for the Government. The Government has organized a fleet of small armed steamers, to the number of six, which ply on the Amoor carrying the mails and Government couriers; they are also engaged in making explorations along the shores, or in penetrating the tributary waters of the Amoor, and occasionally transport private merchandise.

During the year, six private merchant steamers have engaged in the navigation of the Amoor. These vessels, as they ascend the Amoor and its tributaries, will gradually develop the commerce of a vast interior, which can only be reached and rendered certain and profitable by the employment of steam vessels.

A second shipment of Tartan and Bactrian camels—*Camelus Bactrianus*—have taken place from the Amoor to San Francisco. It is understood that they are to be employed in the silver mining districts of Nevada, which country is in many respects similar to the region on the head waters of the Amoor, where these animals are raised in great numbers and suited by the acclimation of the country to the steep mountains of Northwestern Asia.

Other interesting statements are included in the report, embracing a physical view of the Amoor basin—the ginseng and rhubarb productions, and the first commercial opening of the Amoor. Never, in the history of newly acquired distant countries by any European nation, has there been either progress as we have seen on the Amoor. The first American ship entered the Amoor in 1856, and in that year the first organized settlements were set on foot by Russia. No foreigner outside of Russia (Mr. Collins says) had ever seen the Amoor from its sources to the sea, until I accomplished the journey myself; now was a foreigner ever before permitted to visit the Amoor country either by Chinese or Russian authority. Consequently, it is a very new country; and the fact that we now have a number of American merchants and merchant steamboats upon the Amoor, proves that somebody has discovered its value in a commercial point of view. In another place, Mr. Collins says: "I know of no country on the face of the globe where greater results are to be obtained, by equal means employed, than in Northwestern Asia. The opening of it, so far, has cost our Government nothing, and if a little of the money expended on Japan, however beneficial, were expended on the Amoor, the advantages gained would most certainly be proportionate to the outlay."

CHINESE FRIENDSHIP.

A letter received at the State Department from C. D. Williams, Esq., acting consul for the United States at Hankow, China, dated October 22, 1861, says that the viceroys, Taoutai, and all under officials, as well as the Chinese people throughout this province, (Hupei) have continually manifested the most friendly disposition towards the United States, and all American citizens, who have either resided within its boundaries; and it is a matter which I record with gratification, that not a single instance of discord, either with the people or officials, have occurred since the opening of this port.

The letter also states that, during the past six months, the port has been visited by some thirty American steamers and American sailing craft, from Shanghai, with cargoes of imports, native and foreign goods, taking in return full cargoes of tea and native produce.

Speaking of the Taepensu or rebels, the writer states that "experience teaches that they are eminently destructive in their habits, as well as extremely fanatical, and from their actions since holding for over eight years, the country in and about the city of Hankow, they have clearly proven that they have neither ability to construct or maintain a government. This port will probably in future be the depot for the receipt of nearly all the black tea, which have heretofore been sent to the port of Canton, overland from the producing districts and from thence to the seaboard. They will now go forward from this by the great river Yangtze, (upon the banks of which this city is situated), to Shanghai, for shipment hence, and as a partial evidence of the capabilities of this port, it may be noted that over 140,000 chests of tea have been sent forward during the past six months to Shanghai, together with at least ten thousand tons of silk, drugs, hemp, and sundry other native produce."

The writer also suggests that, whenever the Government shall appropriate a salary for the consulate at this port, it should be sufficiently large to command the services of a first class man, with as efficient staff in every respect. In the conclusion of this letter it is stated that the occasional visit during each year of a United States steam vessel of war up this river, will be of great service.

Deputy and Acting United States Consul Alexander Hutchinson, writing to the Secretary of State, under date of Singapore, November 19, 1861, says:

I take this opportunity to inform you that Admiral Bonard, the French Governor General for the French colony in Cochin China, reached this port a few days ago, on his way to Saigon. He intends erecting, on Cape St. James, near Saigon, a light-house, the materials of which are now on their way thither. The light-house is to be in communication with Saigon by the electric telegraph.

A large dry dock is to be shortly built, and a steam *Atelier d'Outillage* for the repair of steam engines and machinery of the largest dimensions.

The engineer for the construction of the work accompanies the present expedition, also the director of the company for the line of French steamers from Marseilles via Suez to Saigon direct.

The Admiral evinces the most earnest disposition to favor, in every possible way, the interests of the commercial community in the Eastern Archipelago.

AFFAIRS AT VIENNA.

The following is a copy of a letter from Theodore Tilius, United States Consul at Vienna, to the Secretary of State at Washington. The letter is dated December 31, 1861, and says:

Sir: I have had the honor to state to you already, in Dispatch No. 3, dated December 31, 1861, that the exportations from here to the United States during this year, fell short, in comparison with the previous year, in the amount of 538,399 florins, a result of our state of affairs at home. The amount of goods involved in this consular during the two years, is as follows:

1860.....2,272,240 florins.
1861.....1,733,340 "

Considering the troubles at home, the result must be considered as very favorable. The commerce of Austria is very extensive, and no country in Germany is more productive, not only in regard to agriculture, but also in manufacturing. If the Government and the legis-

lative body of this Empire would lend their helping hand to Austria, as our Government does to American industry, the Austrian commerce would be immense. One very great obstacle to the development of her commerce is "the remittance imposed by laws of a mercantile society," or "Zamitzwang." Every man has now the privilege to engage in a business as he sees fit.

The representative system of Austria consists of the "Reichsrath," divided into an upper and lower house. All their different provinces send their delegates; but as the elective franchise is limited, it cannot be expected that this legislature should represent the popular sentiments, as our Congress does. However, this "Reichsrath" is at least a progress in the constitutional life of this extensive empire.

Paper currency of the very smallest denominations is here in circulation, as, for instance, 10 kreutzers, about equal to three cents at the present rate of exchange.

The Ministry of Finance presented, a short time ago, the Budget to the "Reichsrath," and as it will be interesting to the Department at the present time to know how the finances of the empire stand, I give you an abstract of the ministry's report in an short space as possible.

The revenue for 1861 was estimated at 300,000,000, the expenditures at 344,000,000 and the deficit at 44,000,000 florins.

This deficit was to be covered by means of several credit operations, which would more-over leave a balance of 8,000,000 florins in the treasury. The returns for 1861 are not yet complete, but the deficit is expected to amount to about 40,000,000 florins.

The total decrease in the revenue of 1861 amounts to 109,000,000 florins, which will be covered by credit operations.

The national bank has not been applied to for a loan, nor have any public bonds been issued.

The estimates for 1862 are as follows:

The courts and civil administration, 97,750,000
Army.....108,500,000
Interest on public debt.....124,500,000
Sundries.....21,800,000

In all.....354,550,000

The revenue for 1862 is estimated at 296,500,000 florins, and the deficit at 58,000,000 florins.

The army estimate shows an increase of 50,000,000 florins.

The deficit is partly to be covered by increased taxes, and partly by credit operations with the national bank, the charter of which is to be renewed in return for a loan of 80,000,000 florins, bearing no interest. Twenty millions of this loan will be repaid in monthly installments of 1,000,000 florins each, and 14,000,000 by 1870.

The state domains are to be sold at certain fixed periods. Twenty-three millions of the lottery loan of 1860 have not been taken up. The financial administration has, however, received from the agents 100,000,000 florins for bond of that loan, and 23,000,000 of the English loan.

The national bank is to be made independent of the state. The following are the terms of the engagement:

1. The privilege of the bank is extended.
2. The State will reimburse specie in twenty monthly installments, the first of which is to be paid in one month after the conclusion of the convention of the bank, the 30,000,000 florins which the latter lent to the former.
3. The 44,000,000 florins which the State owes to the bank for the sinking fund of the anticipation certificates, shall be returned between the present time and 1870.
4. The bank shall be indemnified to the amount of 90,000,000 florins by the annual products of the sale of the domains of the State; a portion of those domains to a fixed amount is to be sold every year; if less than is required to be sold, the State will have to pay the difference.
5. The State abandons to the bank, in order to cover the surplus due to it, the sum of 23,000,000, in specie on the loan of 1862.
6. The bank lends to the State, during the term of its privilege, a certain sum which shall not be called for during that time, (estimated at 80,000,000.)
7. The bank will restore to the State the 30,000,000 of the London loan, deposited as a guarantee, as well as the remainder of the loan of 1860.
8. The bank engages to sell, between this time and a certain fixed period, the titles of railways and of land indemnity arising from the sinking fund.
9. The authorization granted in 1858, to issue notes to the amount of triple their reserve, will be restricted to a fixed sum. All notes issued beyond that amount must be covered by the metallic reserve.
10. The independence of the bank, as regards the State, is guaranteed; it will be placed under the surveillance of a commission of the Reichsrath, which will be at the same time charged with that of the public debt.

The export of Austria amounted, in 1860, to 312,425,063, and the import to 237,298,139 florins. The balance, in favor of the exports, was 78,126,924 florins. The returns of the custom-house officers show the receipt of 9,501,434 florins for toll, from January 1, 1861, till September 30, 1861. This is 554,232 florins less than in the corresponding time of 1860.

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BY W. J. MURTAGH & CO.
GEORGE H. WILSON, EDITOR.

The publication office of the National Republican is at the northeast corner of D and seventh street, second floor, over W. D. Shepherd's store. Entrance on Seventh street.

Friday, January 31, 1862.

Reading Matter on every page.

THE OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE.—We devote a large portion of our paper, to-day, to the very interesting consular correspondence with the State Department. The letter of Mr. Collins is full of interest, as it treats of the Amoor country, of which but little is known.

DANGER TO THE POST OFFICE.—We extract the following from the advertisement for proposals to supply stamped envelopes, recently issued by the Post Office Department:

Proposals are also invited for devices other than water-marks, or additional to such marks, to afford protection against counterfeiting—specimens to be submitted.

We take the liberty of suggesting that perhaps the best precaution against the counterfeiting of the stamped envelope is for the Government itself to manufacture it. Nothing can be more unwise than the quadruplicate letting of the contracts for the supply of postage stamps and stamped envelopes. One effect of this letting is to familiarize the artistic talent of the country with a branch of manufacture, the secret of which should, as far as possible, be confined to the sworn officers and employees of the Government.

Another effect of this letting is to place the Government at the mercy of comparatively irresponsible parties, (contractors,) and even of their employees, who may be tempted to over-charge or surreptitiously put in circulation the certificates of postage prepayment, against which no adequate safeguard can possibly be provided under the present method of manufacturing them. The extent to which stamps and stamped envelopes have been thus put in circulation, by rebel postmasters, during the last summer, strikingly illustrates the danger to which the Post Office Department is exposed, from the contract system of supplying its stamps, at least in the present unsettled condition of the country.

After a thorough trial of this system of supplying its notes, the Bank of England has been compelled, in self-defense, not only to manufacture its own notes, but also to procure the passage of legal enactments against all inquiry into the process of such manufacture. This monopoly of manufacture and the water-marks in the paper have been found to constitute the only safeguards against the counterfeit of these notes, and we have no doubt that they will be found equally effectual in protecting the United States postal envelope.

Mr. Sherman, we understand, has reported a bill authorizing the Superintendent of Public Printing to engrave and lithograph the stamps of the Government. Mr. Coffey should see that, in the manufacture of the stamps, stamped envelopes are included in the same category. The interests of contractors should not be permitted to interfere for a moment with the security of the postal revenues, or with economy in the public expenditures.

HISTORY OF THE GREAT REBELLION.—There are two works now in the course of publication, which assume to be histories of the important events now transpiring: one is known as "The Rebellion Record," and is a compilation of the most important documents, newspaper articles, anecdotes, incidents, poetry, &c., all of which will have their value for future historians. The other is entitled "The Southern Rebellion and the War for the Union." This is a comprehensive history of the great rebellion, embodying also the important State papers, congressional proceedings, and remarkable speeches on which the present crisis has produced. All the important events which gave rise to the rebellion, and which have transpired since its commencement, are carefully presented in an agreeable narrative style, thus forming a connected history of the great ordeal through which our country is now passing. This is a work of the highest merit. In fullness, completeness, accuracy, and logical as well as chronological dependence, it leaves nothing to be desired. It has received the highest commendation from the leading press of the country, and from a large number of distinguished men, among whom are President Lincoln, Secretaries Seward, Chase, Welles, Smith, and a large number of members of Congress. The work is published in New York, by J. D. Torrey, and is for sale here by E. J. Hovey, who is the general agent for the District. Mr. Hovey yesterday opened an office in a conspicuous part of the National Hotel, where the public may procure a copy of the work, as far as published, the first volume bringing the history up to the 4th of March last.

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The first public meeting of this newly organized Society, was held last night at the Rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association, where a paper was read on the subject of the Gulf Stream, by Rev. C. W. Denison, and another by Mr. Disturnell, of New York, on the Rise and Fall of the Waters of Lake Superior. Both papers were highly interesting. Mr. Denison presented the various Gulf stream theories, and attempted to illustrate their fallacy by a series of well attested facts. His theory is that the stream is of subterranean origin, which causes its warmth, its color, and its chemical properties. His theory, to say the least of it, was ingenious. Many of his ideas were novel and striking, and the whole paper attracted marked attention.

Mr. Disturnell's paper was also interesting; it gave a variety of interesting facts touching the peculiarities of Lake Superior. The rise and fall of its waters, Mr. Disturnell thinks, is in consequence of the long continued rains and snows in that region.

This first meeting was quite interesting, and gives promise of a bright future for the Washington Scientific Association.

THE NAVY.

So far as the naval retrenchment bill pending in the Senate touches salaries, I have nothing to say, but I object to that part of it which is intended to break down what few individuals we have left in that Department who do not belong to the navy, such as navy agents, naval store keepers, &c. We have seen this wolf in sheep's clothing prowling about for many years in the garb of navy officers dressed up in buckram, and at the head of bureaus in the Navy Department. These gentlemen, who would be dictators as to everything that belongs to the navy, have been for the last twenty years lobbying about Congress for the purpose of having the laws changed, so that they could have the whole control of everything belonging to the Navy Department, and they have so far succeeded as to get almost everything into their own hands. Now, we differ very much from these gentlemen as to who should control the building of ships and have the management of the yards and docks in their several localities. The navy officers are more capable of sailing the ships and fighting them than civilians, but to say that they understood or had shipbuilding qualifications to build ships, would be an absurdity which no sensible man would believe; and if so, why should they have the control of building as well as sailing the ships? We think that citizens should have the whole control of building the ships and carrying on the navy yards, without any interference from these navy officers.

It is well known that almost every head of a bureau is now filled by one of these gentlemen, and they have been instrumental in having laws passed by Congress making it incumbent on the Department to appoint these gentlemen to all most of the offices and posts, by reading this bill reported by Mr. Sherman, that they have attempted, and do intend, to remove the last vestige of a civilian from the Navy Department, and substitute the navy officers to fill these offices.

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